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DETROIT LETTER OF 1785.

[The manuscript of the following document is in the Lasselle Collection of the Indiana State Library. As can easily be seen, it is a letter from John MacPherson, of Detroit, to a friend, David Gray, a trader at Miami-town (a forerunner of Ft. Wayne). The country in that part of the Northwest was still in possession of the English, the treaty of peace between the United States and the English government in 1783 not being carried out in respect to the evacuation of the ports in the Northwest by the English till after the Jay treaty of 1795.—EDITOR.]

To David Gray,
Merchant,
at Miamie-town.

Detroit 23 March, 1785.

Dear Sir:

I embrace this opportunity to enquire about your Health, and the nature of times in that Country, what appearance of Trade. its said that there is a good hunt to the Southward I hope you will find the good effects of it, by its being in reality so. we have had here a very mild open winter, by no means reckoned favorable for the hunt. Indeed the equipers has reasons to expect but very Indifferent returns from the differant posts here abouts, very dull times in the fort, no business of any kind, either with the French or Indians, the only payment that can be expected for Goods is flour & corn this year, and I see no prospect of being able to dispose of it. the Contractors for the Mackina markett gets what corn & flour they want for Goods out of their own Shops, so that there's Scarcely any paper currency circulating. Mr. McKillep told me that you was a little indisposed when he past the Miamies coming in. I hope you soon got over it; the Measles raged here this season by which many Children died. L. Williams died with that or a Sort of Scarlet fever after Seven days Illness Andrew W.- Old Barthe has taken his departure 14th Instant after about two months Sickness. You have heard undoubtedly of the Barbarous manner Christie & another Man was murdered at the River Rouge at young Cachossa's House by a Sagina Indian apitchi Gabavey his name &

2 Sons, in about a week after the same Indians killed P. Jacobs & one Guthrie - Jno. Dolton was going out with them & made his escape. Jacobs killed one of the sons in the fray. there's several councill's been held since with the other Indians to get them to bring the Murderers. they promise well but perform little. apropos what do you think of the Conjunction of the Six Come^e [Company?] Houses into a grand Societie for carrying on the Indian Trade. time will discover more of the effects of that grand undertaking. its probable that they will not find their advantage in such an Union unless they can procure an exclusive right to the different posts. Whatever occurrences of the plan I write about it will be quite Stale to you, as you'll be better acquainted with them than myself. Mr. Geo. Meldrum is married to Miss Chapoton, Henry Ford to Miss Bella Andrews. there's 2 or 3 other young ladies closely besieged so that a Short time will bring a surrender. Robert McDougall is married to Miss Simonette Campau. The Gentlemen of the Garison keeps on good Sociall terms with the towns people & Major Ancrum seems to gain peoples esteem greatly his justness & Impartiality. no news of any kind, no accounts from Niagara or Fort Pitt, in course no express from Canada. Now permitt me to request the favour of you to lett me know what Mr. Rivard, La Breche, etc are doing. do my dear Sir endeavour to get Something from those fellows recommended to your care, as it will be very hard times with me next Summer. I have wrote you formerly about the way Mr. Ellice [?] got Grevarats & Visgars affairs settled, they are Sett up again and trades in partnership at Sagina. they are furnished with goods from Mr. Abbott & Grosbeck so that you will be able to come on for your money sometime or other. having nothing further to add - I remain - Dear Sir

Your Most Obedient Servant

JOHN MAC PHERSON

Prices Current

flour per C. 60

Ind. Corne per Bushel 12

Oats per Bushel 8

Venison per Car. 32 all Winter

Beef per lb. 1/8 very Scarce.